

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH



Department of English,  
Zabid-College of Education, Hodeidah University

# **Introduction to Language 2**

**(Intro. to Lang. 2)**

A Course-Handout,  
For the 2nd-Year-B.Ed-English, 2nd Semester 2014-2015,

***Tuesdays, from 11: 00 a.m. to 02: 00 p.m. Room – 7***

**Note:** This course-handout of Introduction to language 2 includes further relevant readings, references, bibliographies, and websites. Some of them are available in the library and your flashes/pen-drives.  
***(It is For Private Circulation Only)***

Prepared and Designed By:

**Dr. Abdullah Shaghi**

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## **Section 1: Welcome to the Introduction to Language 2 Course-Handout**

The Introduction to Language 2 Course-Handout focuses on teaching elementary concepts, terms and knowledge about the introduction to the scientific study of language, concentrating on English Morphology and Syntax to the 1<sup>st</sup>-Year-English-B.Ed. students, of the year 2014-2015, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester 2014-2015, in the Department of English, Zabid-College of Education, Hodeidah University, Yemen, by: Dr. Abdullah Shaghi, an Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Ph.D. in Linguistics, from Aligarh Muslim University (A.M.U.), U.P., India, 2010; M.A. in Linguistics from JNU, New Delhi, India in 2006, and B.Ed. in English from Hodeida University (HU) in 1996.

Whereas the first course **Introduction to Language I (219 /E219)** covered areas like elementary phonetics and phonology, this course **Introduction to Language (221ع /E221)**, covers elementary Morphology and Syntax. Thus, it is considered as preparing the students for more advanced courses on Morphology and Syntax in the third year of their study. In other words, the course **Introduction to Language II**, like the previous course **Introduction to Language I**, also aims at developing the Yemeni students' awareness of how the English Language as a foreign language in Yemen (especially in Tihamah of Yemen, Zabid city, Zabid College of Education, Hodeidah University) is structured and operates. The Yemeni students will study some important terms and facts about language in general and especially English and Arabic. In the previous work you have studied the properties of the human language that make it unique and uniquely powerful in studying the human mind, the characteristics of human language that make different from the animal communication, as well as the introductory aspects of the sounds of English as

well as Arabic and their patterns (phonetics and phonology). In this course, you are going to study an introduction to language including the scientific study of language (Linguistics), concentrating on Elementary Morphology and Syntax of English.

The course **Introduction to Language II** is organized in the following sections:

Section 1: Welcome to the Introduction to Language 2 Course-Handout, Section 2: Why Do People Study Language?, Section 3: Linguistic knowledge, Section 4: Language Universals, Section 5: On the Origins of language, Section 6: Language and Thought, Section 7: Language and Brain, Section 8: Language in Education, Section 9: Linguistics = Thinking about Language, Section 10: Language and Linguistics, Section 11: Elementary Morphology and Syntax, Section 12: Some Differences in English-Arabic Morphology and Syntax, and Section 13: Functions of Language.

### **Textbook**

Victoria Fromkin, Robert Rodman and Nina Hyams, *An Introduction to Language* (9th edition 2011).

### **Reading**

Yule, George (2006). *The Study of Language: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 1-2

Kortmann, Bernd (2005). *English Linguistics: Essentials*. Berlin: Cornelsen Verlag. Ch. 1.

Finegan, Edward (2004). *Language: Its Structure and Use*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers. Ch. 1.

### **Advanced Reading**

Bauer, Laurie & Trudgill, Peter (Eds.). (1998). *Language Myths*. London: Penguin.  
4 5

Herrmann, Christoph & Fiebach, Christian (2004). *Gehirn & Sprache*. Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer.

Pinker, Steven (1994). *The Language Instinct*. London: Penguin.

### **Course Requirements**

Mid-term Exam: %45

Final Exam: %105

### **Examinations**

There will be TWO examinations. Each examination will focus primarily on the material which has been covered since the previous examination. There will be a cumulative final examination given during the final examination period.

### **Participation and Attendance**

Participation includes regular attendance, preparation of class materials and readings, and active involvement. Come to class prepared! Complete readings

that are assigned before you come to class. Think about what you are learning, and be ready to participate when you come to class. Ask questions! Please ask if you do not understand or even if you do. If you are having any trouble or if you just want to discuss specific issues make an office appointment or see me after class. Attend class! Attendance is important to understanding the material since we will try to go beyond the textbook material in our class discussions. If you are going to miss class for a good reason, it is a good idea to let me know ahead of time if possible. You are responsible for contacting me and making up missed material if you are absent.

### **Attendance Policy**

**Regular attendance is strongly advised!** Only officially recognized absences will be excused. Excused absences must be recorded within one week.

## **Section 2: Why Do People Study Language?**

It has been attested in literature that people find the subject of language interesting and worth studying for many different reasons. For instance, Language can be used as a way of finding out more about the following:

1. **Psycholinguistics:** Psycholinguistics refers to how our brains work, investigating how children learn language, or how damage to our brains results in certain kind of language disorders;
2. **Applied Linguistics:** Applied Linguistics refers to how to learn and to teach different languages;
3. **Philosophy:** Philosophy is the relationship between meaning, language and perception;
4. **Anthropology:** Anthropology is the role of language in different cultures;
5. **Stylistics:** Stylistics refers to the styles of language used in literature;
6. **Sociolinguistics:** Sociolinguistics refers to the different varieties of language people use, and why there are linguistic differences between different groups; and
7. **Artificial Intelligence:** Artificial Intelligence refers to how to make computers more sophisticated.

## **Section 3: Linguistic knowledge**

**Linguistic knowledge** entails the ability to produce certain sounds that have certain meanings and to understand the sounds made by others. There are several points to take into consideration about *Linguistic knowledge* which are as follows:

- (1) **Linguistic knowledge** is subconscious;
- (2) **Linguistic knowledge** involves: (a) sounds, (b) words, and (c) sentences.
- (3) **The Relationship between form and meaning** is arbitrary (not iconic).
- (4) **Sound Symbolism (onomatopoeic)**: The pronunciation shows the meaning (e.g., splash, bang, hiss, etc.).
- (5) **Competence vs. Performance**: Competence vs. Performance refers to what we know vs. the actual use of language.
- (6) **Descriptive vs. Prescriptive**: Descriptive vs. Prescriptive refers to how language is vs. how language should be.
- (7) **Language Universals**: Language Universals refers to the components that one sees in all languages.

#### **Section 4: Language Universals**

According to Michael Krauss (Stephens: 1993), there are 6,000 dialects, give or take 10 percent, that are still spoken in today's world. Although one cannot be absolutely sure that all of these languages exemplify each and every one of the language universal, in general, linguists agree that languages contain many of the same organizing principles. The following list offers an idea of some **universal facts** about human language (Diaz-Rico & Weed: 1995):

- (1) Where humans exist, language exists.
- (2) There are no 'primitive' languages. All languages are equally complex and capable of expressing an idea.



- (3) Every normal child, born anywhere in the world, of any racial, geographical, social, or economic heritage, is capable of learning any language to which he or she is exposed.
- (4) The relationships between the sounds and meanings of spoken languages or gestures and meanings of sign languages are, for the most part, arbitrary.
- (5) All human languages use a finite set of sounds or gestures that are combined to form meaningful elements of words than then combine to form an infinite set of possible sentences.
- (6) Every spoken language uses discrete sound segments and has vowels and consonants.
- (7) Speakers of any language are capable of producing and comprehending an infinite set of sentences.
- (8) All grammars contain rules for the formation of words and sentences.
- (9) Every language has a way of referring to past time; the ability to negate; the ability to form questions; issue commands; and so on.
- (10) Semantic universals, such as 'male' or 'female,' are found in every language of the world.
- (11) All languages change through time.

## **Section 5: On the Origins of language**

There is long tradition of speculating about the origin of language. Most of this was and is unscientific as it does not apply stringent principles of historical continuity and interrelations.

Modern man has existed for about 200,000 years and after 50,000 BC language had developed all the structural properties which are characteristic of it today. Language is an evolutionary phenomenon which is continually adapted to the communicative needs of its speakers.

The organs of speech are biologically secondary but their rise has led to a specialization such as the great flexibility of the tongue or the relatively deep larynx which distinguishes humans from higher primates [= an animal order including lemurs and tarsiers and monkeys and apes and human beings].

(Source: Raymond Hickey the Neat Summary of Linguistics p. 3)

## **Section 6: Language and Thought**

### **1. Language and Signs**

Language is a communication system that makes use of three types of sign. (A sign is a form (verbal or non-verbal) that represents a certain meaning.

#### **1.1. Three Types of Signs:**

1.1.1. **Index or Symptom:** symptomatic signs spontaneously convey the internal state or emotion of the sender. e.g. fever → illness; raising your eyebrows → surprise;

*Exercise: Can you think about any linguistic example?*

1.1.2. **Icon:** An icon provides a visual, auditory or any perceptual image of thing the form stands for e.g. onomatopoetic words (i.e. sound-imitation words,

e.g. bow-wow for “dog barking” in English), “ ڦ ”

Exercise1: What do the following emoticons (emotional icons) mean?

\(^\`^\)/ .....

> (^\`^\) akbar min larger than

> ^ \_ ^ .....

> \*^ \_ ^\* .....

> @\_@

> \*\_\*

> / \_ \

> > \_ < .....

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet\\_linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_linguistics)

Exercise 2: Think about how “dog barking” is expressed in the other languages:  
 hawhaw in Arabic

<b>Mardarin</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>Spanish</b>	<b>Arabic</b>	<b>Herbrew</b>
[wajwaj]	[vawvaw]	[wahwah]	[wawwaw]	[hawhaw]	[hawhaw]

1.1.3. **Symbol:** Arbitrary relationship between the form and the meaning. e.g. most linguistic forms

## 1. Structuring Principles in Language

1.1. The Principle of **Indexicality**: We can “point” to things in our scope of attention with our language.

1.1.1. ego-centric view of the world (e.g. the deictic expressions such as here, there, now, pronoun)

1.1.2. anthropocentric perspective of the world

Consider the following examples:

a. *who, whose, whom* vs. *which*

b. *the man's coat* and *the coat of the man* but not *\*the house's door*

1.2. The Principle of **Iconicity**: We conceive a similarity between a form of language and the thing it stands for in the real world.

1.2.1. The principle of sequential order: the order of the events is the same as the linear arrangement of their expressions in a linguistic structure.

Consider the following examples:

a. Virginia got married and had a baby.

b. Virginia had a baby and got married.

2.2.2. The principle of distance: things which belong together conceptually tend to be put together linguistically. Consider the following examples:

a. A noisy group *was* hanging around the bar.

A group of noisy students *were* hanging around the bar.

b. How do you arrange the order of *three, yellow, new, big* before the noun *cars*?

\_\_\_\_\_ cars

2.3. The principle of **QUANTITY**: we tend to associate more forms with more meaning, and, conversely, less form with less meaning:

a. That's a loooooong story.

b. No smoking.

Don't smoke, will you?

Would you mind not smoking here, please?

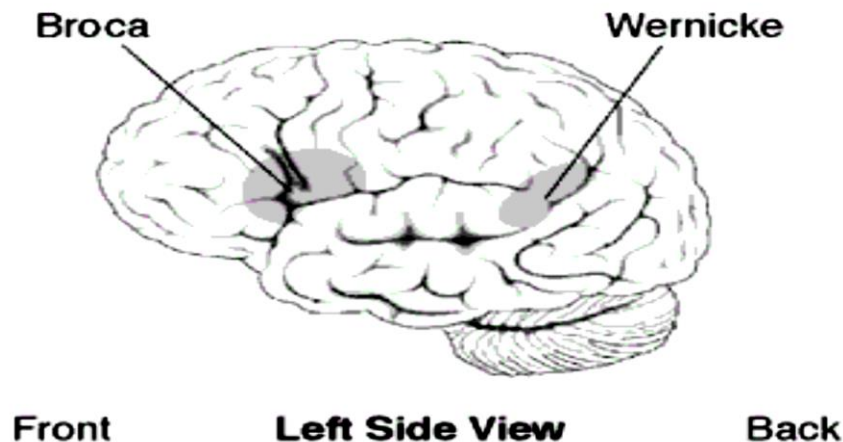
c. Repetition strategy (i.e. reduplication) in forming plural forms or showing emphasis.

- (1) /bal bal/ “to wet” (Arabic)
- (2) *shaky-shaky* ‘earthquake’ (in Krio)
- (3) *ie* ‘house’ *ieie* ‘houses’ (in Japanese)

2.4. The Principle of **symbolicity**: conventional pairing of form and meaning.

## Section 7: Language and Brain

Language is a cognitive skill and one therefore whose roots are situated in the evolution of the brain. We do not know exactly when our ancestors began to speak (estimates vary from 30,000 – 100,000 years ago), or even what triggered them to do so, but once they started, there was no stopping them. From such humble beginnings the 5,000 – 6,000 languages we assume to exist today have evolved. Research mainly on **language aphasia** has been able to show that there are two major areas of the brain specialized in language processing, production and comprehension: **Broca’s** and **Wernicke’s areas** situated in the left hemisphere and named after the two physicians who first discovered them in the 19th century.



## Section 8: Language in Education

Language is central to education: it is the **means** by which educational content is communicated; it is an **object** of study; it is an object of **beliefs** that are important in education; it is a key element of students' **identities**; it poses potential **problems** in education, largely because of the beliefs we have about it; and it is a valuable **resource** for those who know how to make use of it.

Language is a *means of education* in that it is the primary medium of communication between students and teachers and between students and textbooks.

Language is an *object of education* because it is the material out of which texts are woven, and because language itself is the object of study in writing and speaking courses. We focus on language as we learn to edit our essays and speeches. We develop our vocabularies and learn the meanings, uses, and conventional spellings of words. We learn to control the genres required for various disciplines and the specific characteristics expected in those genres, for example, personal essays, academic papers of various sorts, business letters, reports, and magazine articles.

Language is also an object of study in so far as we develop our skills in using it to communicate, to acquire knowledge from lectures and books, to integrate new information with old, to replace false beliefs with new true ones, and to increase or decrease our estimates of the likelihood that some belief we hold is true.

It is important to note here that students who are learning English as a second or foreign language labor under a double burden, because English is simultaneously both the means and an object of their education.

(**Source:** Introduction to the Linguistic Study of Language, by Delahunty and Garvey, p. 7)

## **Section 9: Linguistics = Thinking about Language**

### **Linguistics**

**Linguistics** is the (scientific) study of (human) language (Crysal: 1992).

Linguistics is conducted along two axes: *Theoretical* vs. *Applied*: *Theoretical* (or *General*) *Linguistics* is concerned with frameworks for describing individual languages and theories about universal aspects of language; *applied linguistics* applies these theories to practical problems such as language teaching, speech synthesis, or speech therapy. Someone who engages in this study is called a **linguist**. The linguist is someone who studies linguistics rather than someone who speaks several languages.

### **History of Linguistics (schools)**

The history of linguistics is bound up with various theories which have been proposed in the attempt at explaining the nature of the human language faculty. These theories can be grouped into three broad categories which correspond roughly to historical epochs.

Theoretical orientation	Historical period
0) non-theoretical studies	before the 19th century
1) Historical linguistics	19th century
2) Structuralism	first half of 20th century
3) Generative grammar	second half of 20th century

There is a distinction between general and descriptive linguistics, the former being about concepts and the latter about investigating and describing languages.

Theoretical linguistics develops models of language competence while applied linguistics deals with the uses to which linguistics can be put in practical affairs such as language teaching.

All languages are divided into levels which are the divisions made according to the status of elements — sounds (phonology), words (morphology), sentences (syntax). In addition one has the level of meaning (semantics) and language use (pragmatics).

Areas of linguistics are concerned with the approach and scope of a linguistic study. This can for example concern social uses of language (sociolinguistics), the process of learning language (language acquisition), and historical processes (language change).

Various linguistic theories have been developed over the past two centuries. Three main schools can be recognized: Neogrammarianism (late 19th century), structuralism (first half of 20th century), generative grammar (second half of 20th century).



## **Development of Linguistics**

The most important points to consider in the development of Linguistics are briefly shown as follows:

- (1) 1786 - William Jones demonstrated that Sanskrit had similarities with Greek, Celtic, Latin, Germanic and Persian  $\Rightarrow$  Comparative linguistics – Indo-European
- (2) 1822 - Grimm's law of sound changes
- (3) 1892 - Frege's triangle (real object, concept, symbol; reference and sense)
- (4) 1916 - Saussure's Cours de linguistique générale  $\Rightarrow$  Structuralism
- (5) 1933 – Bloomfield's (Introduction to the study of) Language  $\Rightarrow$  Immediate constituency analysis
- (6) 1957 – Chomsky's Syntactic Structures  $\Rightarrow$  Generative –transformational grammar
- (7) 1963 – Roman Jakobson's Essais de linguistique générale  $\Rightarrow$  Language functions (see section of Language Functions below)
- (8) 1960's – Austin and Searle's Speech Act Theory  $\Rightarrow$  Pragmatics
- (9) 1976 – Halliday's System and function in language  $\Rightarrow$  Systemic functional grammar

## **Sub-Disciplines of Linguistics**

- (1) *Microlinguistics*: phonology, morphology, lexicography, semantics, syntax, text analysis.

(2) *Macrolinguistics*: pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, etc.

(3) *Applied linguistics*: lexicography, translation studies, error analysis, computer linguistics.

## **Section 10: Language and Linguistics**

The goal of *linguistics* is to provide valid analyses of *language* structure.

*Linguistic theory* is concerned with establishing a coherent set of independent principles to explain phenomena in language. There are no *primitive* languages.

Each language is adapted for the community which speaks it, be this industrialised or not.

Onomatopoeia is not a major principle in language although symbols (icons) may be present on a more abstract level. There is no such thing as correct language in any absolute sense. Language is neutral and should not be the object of value judgements. Lay people tend to confuse language and attitudes to those who use language.

Written language is secondary and derived from spoken language. Despite its status in western societies, written language is only of marginal interest to the linguist.

Linguistics is a science although the evidence for assumptions about the structure of language is never direct. Linguists are more concerned with designing valid and general models of linguistic structure rather with than searching for proof in any strictly empirical sense.

Language consists largely of rules which determine its use. There are, however, many exceptions. Native speakers can deal with a large amount of irregularity which is stored in the mental lexicon.

Knowledge of language refers to many abstract structures such as those of sentence types or systematic units such as phonemes or morphemes. Language would appear to be ordered modularly, i.e. to consist of a set of subsystems, which are labelled 'levels of language', such as phonology, morphology or syntax.

Most knowledge about language is unconscious and cannot be accessed directly. The task of the linguist is often to demonstrate the existence of this unconscious knowledge and to suggest methods of describing it.

(**Source:** Raymond Hickey the Neat Summary of Linguistics p. 3)

## **Section 11: Elementary Morphology and Syntax**

Whereas the first course **Introduction to Language 1** covered areas like elementary phonetics and phonology ( where you have studied elementary Phonetics and phonology that have to do with how the sounds of language are produced in the human vocal organs (lungs, larynx, oral cavity (mouth), nasal cavity), and how sounds are systematically organized in particular languages like English and Arabic, this course **Introduction to Language 2 is going** cover areas like elementary Morphology and Syntax ( where you are going to study elementary Morphology and Syntax that have to do with how these sounds combine to form words (Morphology) and sentences (Syntax).)

## **Morphology**

**Morphology** is the study of the structure of words, including the rules of word formation. It comes from a Greek word meaning ‘shape’ or ‘form’ and is used in linguistics to denote the study of words, both with regard to their internal structure and their combination or formation to form new or larger units.

Morphology can further be divided into **inflectional** (concerned with the endings put on words) and **derivational** (involves the formation of new words).

**Affixation** is the process of attaching an inflection or, more generally, a bound morpheme to a word. This can occur at the beginning or end and occasionally in the middle of a word form.

Morphemes can be classified according to whether they are **bound** or **free** and furthermore lexical or grammatical.

**Word formation** processes can be either productive or non-productive. There are different types of word-formation such as coinage, compounding, (conversion), back formation, blending and clipping.

For any language the distinction between native and foreign elements in the **lexicon** is important.

**Root** is a morpheme from a lexical class, typically V, N, A, from which a lexical word is built (by adding affixes) as in *sing* in *sing-er*.

**Stem** is a morphological constituent larger than the root and smaller than the word.

**Word** is the smallest unit of grammar which can stand alone, for example, **tree** is a word, **tree-s** is a word, and **-s** is not a word.

Derivational affixes are inside of the stem, and inflectional affixes attach to the stem.

**Root:** sing                      **Stem:** singer                      **Word:** singers

## **Words**

Words are units of meaning. There are two types of words: (1) **Lexical Content**

**Words:** They constitute the major word classes. Their membership is open.

Open-class words (nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs). New words can be

added (e.g., download as a verb); and (2) **Function or Grammatical Words:** They have some syntactic function. They are closed-class words (articles, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns).

“**A Word**” as defined by the electronic easy-lingoes dictionary is a unit of language that native speakers can identify. It is a term in common everyday use but one which linguists cannot easily define. “Is “**isn’t**,” for example, one word or two,” and, “how about *mother-in-law*?” It denotes one concept but is formed out of

three recognizable 'words': *mother*, *in* and *law*. Linguists therefore prefer other terms, referring to **morphs**, **morphemes** and **lexemes** when talking about 'words'.

## **Morphemes**

A **Morpheme** is the smallest unit of meaning that cannot be further analyzed into simpler elements (e.g., cat, happy, un+ [unhappy]).

- a- One morpheme: boy, desire.
- b- Two morphemes: boyish, desirable.
- c- Three morphemes: boyishness, desirability
- d- Four morphemes: gentlemanliness, undesirability
- e- More than four: ungentlemanliness

### **Morphemes can be free or bound:**

**Free Morphemes** can stand alone; they can exist on their own. They don't need to be attached to other morphemes (e.g., free, cat, small).

**Bound Morphemes** must be joined to other morphemes. They are parts of words. Never words by themselves (e.g., -less, -ness, un-).

### **Bound morphemes can be:**

- a- **prefixes**: they occur before stem morphemes (e.g., un-, in-, re-)
- b- **suffixes**: they occur after stem morphemes (e.g., -less, -dom, -ness, -ify)
- c- **infixes**: they occur in the middle of stems ("-bloody-" in "in-bloody-credible")

d- **circumfixes**: they occur around stems ("en--en" in "enlighten")

## **Morphemes can be:**

### **Inflectional morphemes:**

Inflectional Morphemes are bound morphemes that never change the syntactic category of the words they are attached to. They usually function as grammatical markers of tense, number, gender, case, and so forth. In English, they can be ONLY suffixes:

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1- -s third person singular present | e.g., She cleans her room weekly.             |
| 2- -ed past tense                   | e.g., She cleaned her room yesterday.         |
| 3- -ing progressive                 | e.g., She is cleaning her room now.           |
| 4- -en past participle              | e.g., She has broken the window.              |
| 5- -s plural                        | e.g., She cleaned all the rooms in the house. |
| 6- 's possessive                    | e.g., She cleaned her brother's room.         |
| 7- -er comparative                  | e.g., Her room is cleaner than her brother's. |
| 8- -est superlative                 | e.g., Her father's room is the cleanest.      |

Based on the above inflectional morphemes, we will have the term “**Inflection**” that refers to the formation of grammatical variants of a word as in book, book-s, and sing, sing-s.

### **Derivational Morphemes:**

Derivational Morphemes may change the syntactic category and/or the meaning of the word (e.g., -ish "boyish"). (p. 78).

### **Word Formation Processes:**

1. **Derivation** is the formation of new words by adding affixes as in sing-er.
2. **Coinage:** The construction and addition of new words into the language. They become the generic names though originally product names (e.g., Kleenex, Xerox, Vaseline).
3. **Compounds** are two or more free morphemes combined together to form new words (e.g., bittersweet, headstrong, carryall, poorhouse, pickpocket, highborn, sleepwalk)
4. **Back-Formation:** A new word that enters the lang. because of an incorrect morphological analysis (peddle from peddler, assuming that the -er is the agentive suffix.) (swindle, edit from editor, swindler [cheater], and stoker [one who starts a fire])
5. **Abbreviations** (clipping): prof. for professor, telly for TV, bike, phone, math, ad
6. **Words from Names:** Sandwich, Jumbo (elephant).
7. **Blends:** Two words are combined together after deleting some parts. (e.g., smog= smoke and fog) (motel= motor + hotel).
8. **Acronyms:** Words that are derived from the initials of several words (e.g., AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) (e.g., NFL: National Football League).



## **Syntax**

**Syntax** refers to the possible arrangements of words in a language. It refers to the rules of sentence formation; the basic unit is the sentence which minimally consists of a main clause (containing at least a subject and verb); it is the component of the mental grammar that represents speakers' knowledge of the structure of phrases and sentences. The grammars of all languages include rules of syntax that reflect speakers' knowledge of these facts. Sentences are not random strings of words. To be a sentence, words must conform to specific patterns determined by the syntactic rules of the language.

**Universal Grammar (UG)** represents an attempt to specify what structural elements are present in all languages, i.e. what is the common core, and to derive means for describing these adequately. Language would appear to be organized modularly. Thus syntax is basically independent of phonology for instance, though there is an interface between these two levels of language.

**Syntax**, together with **inflectional morphology**, belongs to what is called in the traditional terminology the “**grammar of a language**”. People have many associations with that term and not all of them are necessarily positive. For instance, some people believe that certain uses of language are examples of “**bad grammar**”, that everyday spoken language and youth slang “**lack grammar**” or that the grammar of their native language is failing.

All those opinions of people are based on a **normative**, or **prescriptive**, attitude towards grammar, while **linguists** approach grammar, just like any other aspect of

language, **descriptively**, in the same way that a biologist approaches an organism or a physician looks at molecules.

## **Word-order**

(1) *The dog bit the man.*

(2) *The man bit the dog.*

Changing word-order in (1) and (2) changes the meaning of the sentence.

(3) *I gave him the book.*

(4) *I gave the book to him.*

Changing word-order in (3) and (4) does not change the meaning of the sentence.

## **Definition of a Sentence**

Traditionally, a **sentence** is any utterance or sequence of words which is regarded as capable of standing alone to express a coherent thought as in “I am a college-student.”

## **Sentence Structure**

Sentences are not simply chains of words, but have an internal, mostly hierarchical structure. This **grammatical hierarchy** can be illustrated by the following list of the categories used for the analysis of sentence structure:

1. **sentences** contain one or several
2. **clauses** contain one or several
3. **phrases** contain one or several
4. words from different **word classes**

### **Word classes: Analysis of Sentence Structure**

The starting-point of the **analysis of sentence structure** is the classification of words into **word classes** or, more traditionally, parts of speech. A basic division is made between lexical and grammatical (or functional) word classes; to the former belong nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, to the latter the classes of determiners, pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions.

While speakers come up with new lexical words quite frequently, i.e. these constitute a rather open set; function words usually form a closed system. Although word class definitions have traditionally been based on semantic criteria, it is much safer to define a word class on the basis of structural, i.e. morphological and syntactic, criteria.

### **Syntactic Categories**

A family of expressions that can substitute for one another without loss of grammaticality is called a **syntactic category**.

## **Noun Phrases (NPs)**

**Noun Phrases (NPs)** may function as the subject or as various objects in a sentence. It always contains some form of a noun (common nouns like boy, proper nouns like John, or pronouns like he). Examples: the child, a police officer, and so on thus, an NP can consist of one word (he, John) or more words (the child, a police officer) NP can even include a verbal complex as shown by:

Romeo who was a Montague loved Juliet who was a Capulet.

Romeo who was a Montague is the NP subject, and Juliet who was a Capulet is the NP object of this sentence.

Consider (a) to (i) below, which item contains a Noun Phrase (NP)?

- (a) a bird
- (b) the red banjo
- (c) have a nice day
- (d) with a balloon
- (e) the woman who was laughing
- (f) it
- (g) John
- (h) went
- (i) that the earth is round

Try inserting each expression above into the contexts: "Who discovered \_\_\_\_\_?"

"\_\_\_\_\_ was seen by everyone."

Only those sentences in which NPs are inserted are grammatical, because only NPs can function as subjects and objects.

### **Verb Phrases (VPs)**

**Verb Phrases (VPs)** always contain a Verb (V), which may be followed by other categories, such as a Noun Phrase or Prepositional Phrase (PP). The Verb Phrases are those that can complete the sentence "The child\_\_\_\_\_."

### **Examples:**

- (a) *The child saw a clown*
- (b) *\*The child a bird*
- (c) *The child slept*
- (d) *\*The child smart*
- (e) *The child is smart*
- (f) *The child found the cake*
- (g) *The child realized that the earth was round.*

Other syntactic categories are Sentence (S), Determiner (Det./D), Adjective (Adj./A), Noun (N), Pronoun (Pro), Preposition (P), Prepositional Phrase (PP), Adverb (Adv.), Auxiliary Verb (Aux), and Verb (V).

## Generative Grammar

**Generative Grammar (see below)** is a formally explicit grammar which defines the set of grammatical sentences in a language; the term has been introduced by Chomsky in this sense, and is also more generally used for the grammar(s) developed by Chomsky and the research community around him.

In Generative Grammar, the **sentence** is the largest constituent that is capable of syntactic characterization. Observe the following phrase structure rules:

$S \rightarrow NP VP$

$VP \rightarrow V NP$

$NP \rightarrow \text{John, Mary}$

$V \rightarrow \text{likes}$

Generates:

*John likes Mary*

*Mary likes John*

The above symbols are read as follows:

$S = \text{Sentence} \rightarrow NP = \text{Noun Phrase} + VP = \text{Verb Phrase}$

$VP = \text{Verb Phrase} \rightarrow V = \text{Verb} + NP = \text{Noun Phrase}$

$NP = \text{Noun Phrase} \rightarrow N = \text{Noun John, Mary}$

$V = \text{Verb likes}$

## Section 12: Some Differences in English-Arabic Morphology and Syntax

Like English, Arabic language is studied from a scientific perspective through Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics.

In **Morphology**, there are very few English Arabic cognates and because English and Arabic are not cognate languages, i.e. genetically related. They are considerably different in the classes that are characterized by inflectional affixes. Arabic has inflection in the nouns, adjectives, verbs, pronouns, relative and demonstrative pronouns; English has inflection in all these except adjectives. In Arabic, Inflectional affixes may be prefixes (in verbs), suffixes; in English they are suffixes only. Arabic has three number forms: singular, dual and plural; English has singular and plural. The Arabic equivalent to an English singular countable noun is singular and to an English plural countable noun is always plural in regular and irregular variable nouns that have both singular and plural forms, e.g.:

**Eng. Ar. Eng. Ar.**

Boy ولد, boys اولاد

Calf عجل calves عجول

Ox ثور oxen; ثيران

Foot قدم feet; اقدام

Radius قطر radii; اقطار

Larva يرقة larvae; يرقات

Stratum طبقة strata; طبقات

Matrix مصفوفة matrices; مصفوفات

Thesis رسالة theses ; رسائل

Criterion معيار criteria; معايير

Plateau هضبة plateaux; هضاب

American امريكي Americans; امريكان

Finn فنلندي Finns; فنلنديون

Englishman انجليزي Englishmen; انجليز

Pakistani, باكستاني Pakistanis; باكستانيون

The order of words is different in English from that of Arabic specifically in that adjectives follow the noun they qualify. Here, speakers will make word order mistakes in written and/or spoken English. Arabic L1S may also include a pronoun which in English it is omitted, like “Where is the pen which I gave *it* to you yesterday?” Finally, because there are few English/Arabic cognates, speakers/learners difficulty is compounded in their comprehension of written and spoken English and effort to acquire English (retrieved from (Source:<http://esl.fis.edu/grammar/langdiff/Arabic.htm> 08/02/2015).

There are no modal verbs in Arabic, and often an auxiliary is needed making such mistakes as “Do I must do that?” When speaking English, the indefinite article may be omitted by an Arabic L1, because it does not exist in Arabic, as well as that of genitive constructions.

**In Syntax**, there are two tenses in Arabic: past and present. There is no future tense corresponding to the time/tense relation for present and past. The future time is rendered by means of the future particles ( سوف ، يذهب سوف ، سوفسيذهب ) and ( س )



ذهب). What are they? Also, Arabic has no verb tense “*to be*” in the present tense and no auxiliary “*do*”. Furthermore, there is a single present tense in Arabic, as compared to English, which has the simple and continuous forms. These differences result in errors such as “*She good teacher!*”, “*When you come to Germany?*”, “*I flying to Egypt tomorrow.*” or “*Where he going?*”

The word order of Arabic is Verb, Subject, Object (VSO), but that of English is Subject, Verb, and Object (SVO). Moreover, Arabic uses punctuation much more loosely than English.

Arabic makes gender distinctions in nouns, adjectives, verbs, pronouns, relative pronouns and demonstratives. There are two genders: masculine and feminine. Persons, things and animals may be masculine or feminine. The Arabic gender system is not logical or physical except in persons and animals. Male persons are masculine, female persons are feminine. Things may be masculine or feminine. The connection between the biological category 'sex' and the grammatical category 'gender' is not always very close. Arabic nouns have inherent gender with important grammatical consequences. This system of classification results in two large classes of masculine and feminine.

## **Section 12: Functions of Language**

According to Roman Jakobson (1960), language must serve the following six (6) functions (Wardhaugh: 1993):

- (1) “Cognitive” or ‘referential’ to convey messages and information;
- (2) “Conative” to persuade and influence others through commands and entreaties;
- (3) “Emotive” to express attitudes, feelings and emotions;
- (4) “Phatic” to establish communion with others;
- (5) “Meta-lingual” to clear up difficulties about intentions, words and meanings; and “poetic” to indulge in language for its own sake.

Another classification, proposed by Michael Halliday (1973), refers to the following seven (7) different categories (Wardhaugh: 1993):

- (1) “Instrumental” refers to the fact that language allows speakers to get things done and happen through the use of words alone;
- (2) “Regulatory” refers to language used in an attempt to control events once they happen;
- (3) “Representational” refers to the use of language to communicate knowledge about the world, to report events, to make statements, to give accounts, to explain relationships, to relay messages, and so on;
- (4) “Interactional” refers to language used to ensure social maintenance. (Phatic communication is part of it, those small ‘meaningless’ exchanges which indicate that a channel of communication is open should it be needed).
- (5) “Personal” refers to language used to express the individual’s personality;
- (6) “Heuristic” refers to language used in order to acquire knowledge and understanding of the world; and

- (7) “Imaginative” refers to language used to create imaginary systems, whether these are literary works, philosophical systems or utopian visions, or daydreams and idle musings.

Dell Hymes (1974) has proposed the acronym “**SPEAKING**” to cover all factors to describe the use of language (Wardhaugh: 1993):

- (1)(**S**) “Setting and scene”: Setting refers to the concrete physical circumstances in which speech takes places. Scene refers to the psychological and cultural circumstances;
- (2)(**P**) “participants” refer to speakers and listeners, addressors and addressees or senders and receivers;
- (3)(**E**) “ends” refer to the recognized and expected outcomes of an exchange as well as the goals that participants seek to accomplish through that exchange;
- (4)(**A**) “act sequences” refers to the actual language forms that are used, how these are used and the relationship of what is said to the actual topic at hand;
- (5)(**K**) “key” refers to the tone, manner or spirit in which a particular message is conveyed;
- (6)(**I**) “instrumentalities” refer to the choice of channel one makes. Is it oral or written, a language or a dialect, a code or a register and so on?
- (7)(**N**) “norms of interaction and interpretation” refer to the specific behaviors and proprieties that attach to speaking and how these are viewed by someone who does not share them; and
- (8)(**G**) “Genres” refers to what we must recognize in certain kinds of exchange (novels, poems, riddles, jokes, editorials, wills, etc.).

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